

# A collection of Phantom Shields

*For Sale*









# PHANTOM SHIELDS of the Wahgi Valley, Papua New Guinea Highlands



The Wahgi Valley, in the high montane region of New Guinea, first discovered by the outside world only in 1933, is an extraordinary place for a new contemporary art form to emerge at the beginning of the 21st Century: shields of warfare painted with the superhero of an American comic book, The Phantom.

The story of the Phantom Shields is one of the clash of two remarkably different cultures; the elaborate culture of the New Guinea Highlands, technologically in the stone-age meeting head-on the incredible complexity of the fast modern Western world, with aeroplanes, cars, new foods and guns.

This development was entirely home-grown. The Phantom first appeared in newspapers as comic strips in the early 1970s and soon after comic books were imported for sale in the regional towns of the New Guinea Highlands. The progression from comic book to use within Wahgi culture was gradual, and it was the convergence, in the 1980s and 1990s, of the first educated generations ( who now could read the Phantom comic ) with the re-emergence of tribal fighting ( after a 40 year hiatus under colonial suppression ), both together with the innovative spirit of Highlanders, saw juxtapositions emerge that incorporated the traditional beliefs with new concepts. Wahgi cosmology equated well with the historical storyline of the Phantom.

We wish to present two things here, at the San Francisco Tribal Art Fair 2021 – the new publication about the Phantom Shield story, entitled; “MAN WHO CANNOT DIE: Phantom Shields of the New Guinea Highlands”, together with a small exhibition, for sale, of some Phantom shields.



left: Early Phantom comic; initially printed in tok pisin, but later only in English.

right: Phantom shield artist, John Wahgi, with 3 shields in 2012.





## **B6. SHIELD, Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province, PNG**

Depicting The Phantom holding pistol and an axe

Inscribed: "Phantom"

The Phantom is shown in a protective, but aggressive stance, threatening to the enemy warriors. He holds an axe in one hand, a pistol in the other. Red dominates this Phantom image; it is a traditional favourite choice for shields as it incorporates the notions of both blood and victory.

Wood, natural pigment, commercial paint, rattan. H: 149.9 cm.

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2005.

Bert Collection, Toronto, Canada.

Photo: Jessica Lindsay Phillips.

Price: \$ 6,500







## **B11. SHIELD, Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province, PNG**

Depicting The Phantom advancing holding a pistol

Inscribed: "Phantom"

The Phantom, painted using his comic book costume color of purple, is striding forward, in movement. To enemy warriors, he is moving towards them, gun in hand. Shields could be seen for long distances on the more open valley floor of the Wahgi Valley, where large-scale wars traditionally occurred; and the predominant yellow colour would stand out starkly in the landscape.

Wood, commercial paint, rattan, fiber. 155 x 56 cm.

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2009.

Private collection, Australia.

Photo: Stephen Oxenbury.

Price: \$ 6,000







**B16. SHIELD, Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province, PNG**

Depicting the Phantom firing two pistols

Inscribed: "Phantom"

The Phantom is aggressively firing guns; with the implied meaning hidden meaning that he is "invincible". Though only the upper torso is depicted, the figure has a sense of movement and energy, highlighted by the two flashes from the pistols.

Wood, natural pigment, commercial paint, rattan, fiber. 165 x 74 cm.

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2007.

Private collection, Australia.

Photo: Stephen Oxenbury.

Price: \$ 7,000









**B17. SHIELD, Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province, PNG**

Attached near base of shield: "Toyota LandCruiser emblem"

Depicting The Phantom holding a trident

The underlying design shows the traditional motifs of a central circle and radiating lines. A calm, confident Phantom is painted over. He has guns at his side, and also holds the traditional 3-pronged spear, an important part of Wahgi Valley warfare before the advent of the gun. Most probably same artist as B19. The car emblem gives status and power to the clan.

Wood, natural pigment, commercial paint, rattan, Toyota Land Cruiser emblem. 167.6 x 66 cm.

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2009.

Bert Collection, Toronto, Canada.

Photo: Jessica Lindsay Phillips.

Price: \$ 6,500









**B19 SHIELD Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province, PNG**

Depicting The Phantom holding a spear

Inscribed: "Phantom"

The Phantom stands, strongly but calmly, with guns holstered, and a

bottom

Wood, commercial paint, rattan. 160 x 71.1 cm.

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2009.

Bert Collection, Toronto, Canada.

Photo: Jessica Lindsay Phillips.

Price: \$ 6,000







**B27 SHIELD Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province, PNG**

Depicting The Phantom standing with arms crossed

This is certainly an ancient shield, almost probably pre-contact or if not, early

Wood, commercial paint, natural pigment, antler 172 x 63 x 411

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 1998.

Bert Collection, Toronto, Canada.

Photo: Jessica Lindsay Phillips.

Price: \$ 8,000







**B33 SHIELD, Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province, PNG**

Depicting the head of the Phantom

PNG numberplate, attesting to the status and power of the clan, that they

and the text become most important: words quoted from the comic. These phrases are sometimes written in English, and other times in tok pisin.

**Wood, commercial paint, rattan, automotive license plate 174-67-100**

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2014.

Bert Collection, Toronto, Canada.

Photo: Jessica Lindsay Phillips.

Price: \$ 7,500.





PHANTOM CANNOT DIE

ENG  
EAC-706



**B35 SHIELD Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province, PNG**

**Wood, natural pigment, commercial paint, atar 11431582 km**

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2000.

Bert Collection, Toronto, Canada.

Photo: Jessica Lindsay Phillips.

**Price: \$ 7,000**







**D7 SHIELD Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province, PNG**

Depicting bust of The Phantom holding two pistols

The Phantom with pistols and crossed arms is an often-used image on these

Wood, commercial paint, rattan. 172 x 74 cm.

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2009.

Private collection, Australia.

Photo: Stephen Oxenbury

Price: \$ 7,500







**F4 SHIELD Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province PNG**

11.0 x 11.0 x 1.0 cm (4.3 x 4.3 x 0.4 in)

Wood, rattan, natural pigment, commercial paint

The Phantom is painted red; a change from the purple costume of the comic

book. The shield is decorated with a black and white design of a

Phantom figure in a dynamic pose.

**Wood, rattan, natural pigment, commercial paint 140 x 59 x 20 mm**

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2011.

Private collection, Australia.

Photo: Stephen Oxenbury.

Price: \$ 6,000







**F6. SHIELD Wahgi Valley, Jiwaka Province, PNG**

Inscribed: "Phantom"

**Wood, commercial paint, metal number plate, rattan 158 x 64 cm**

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2002.

Private collection, Australia

**Photo: Stephen Oxenbury**

**Price: \$6,500**



PHANTOM



P-3339



## 16. SHIELD. Wahgi Valley. Jiwaka Province. PNG

Depicting The Phantom standing in front of Skull Cave

This artist often depicted The Phantom and his home, the skull cave. This

skulls - on the Phantom's ring, his waistband and his skull cave home, connect

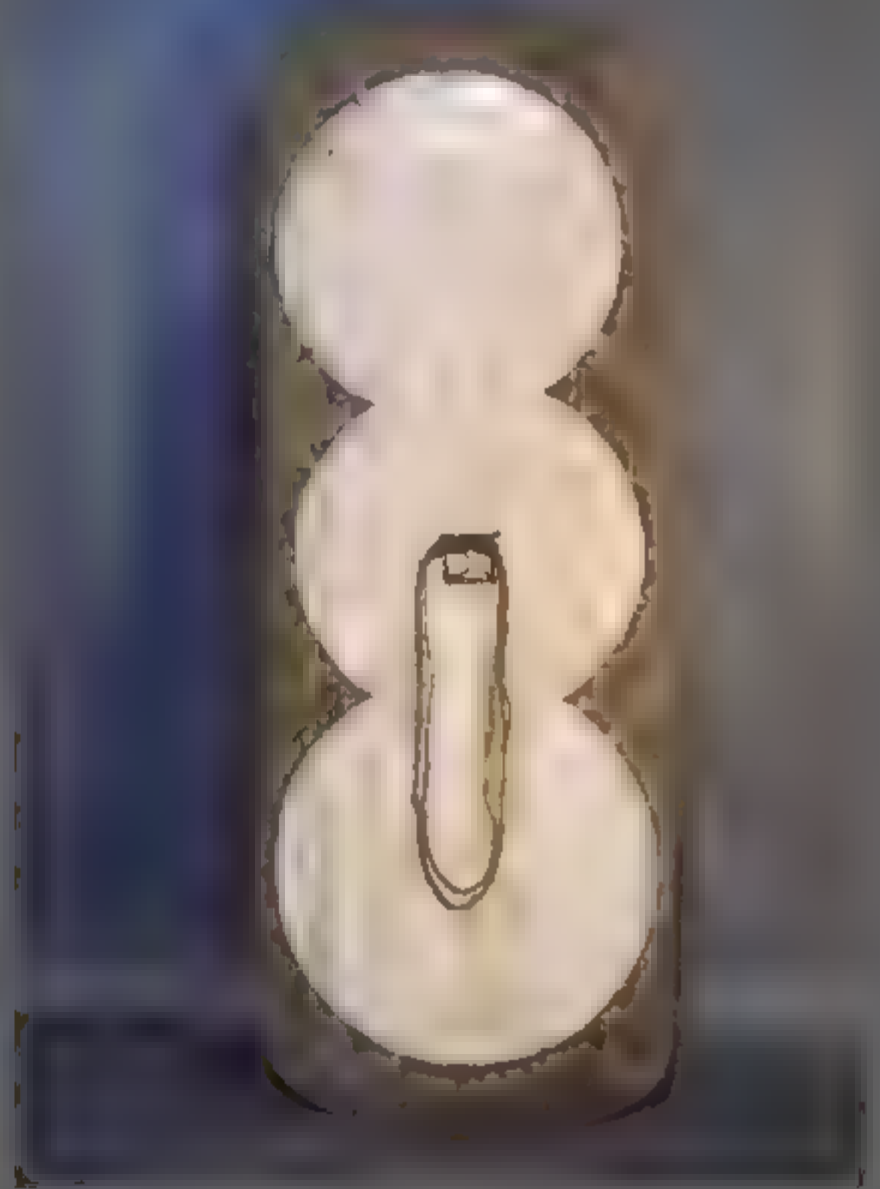
Wood-tatoo Commercial paint 1/2 x 1/2 x 1/2

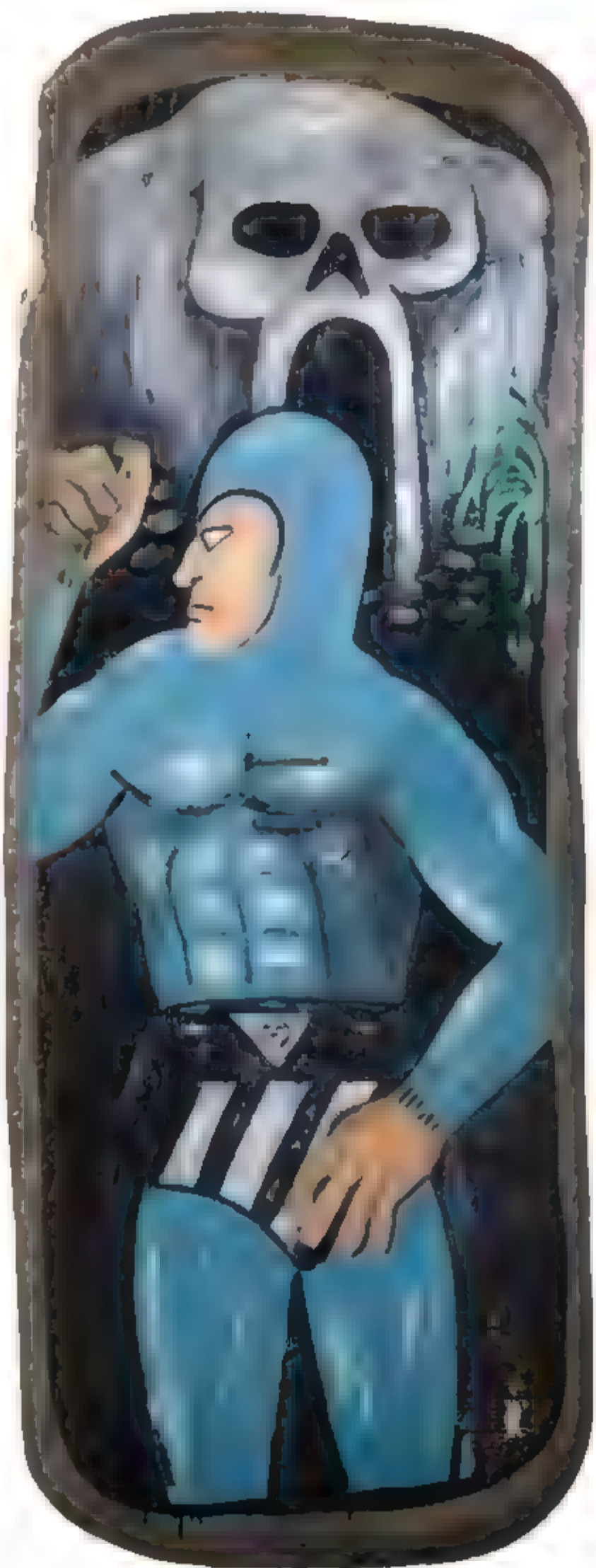
Collected by Chris Boylan, Wahgi Valley, 2010

Private collection, Australia.

Photo: Stephen Oxenbury

Price: \$ 6,000







#### 14 SHIELD. Wahgi Valley. Western Highlands. PNG

designs.

Inscribed: '6.2.6', This refers to another contemporary inscription of

right moment, the bullets ricocheted.

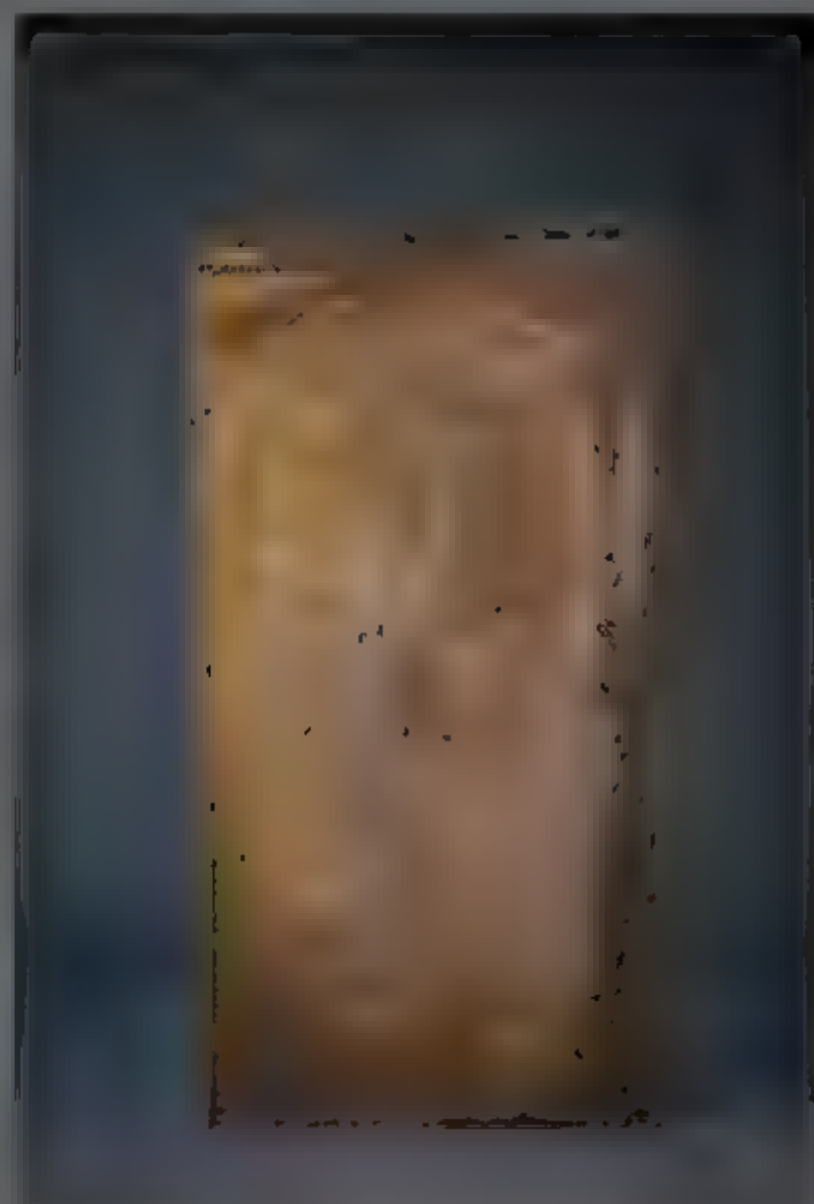
Metal, commercial paint, bailing wire. 170 x 88 cm.

Collected by Chris Boylan, Mount Hagen, 2010.

Private collection, Australia.

Photo: Stephen Oxenbury.

Price \$6,000





## K2 SHIELD, Wahgi Valley, Western Highlands, PNG

Wood • natural pigments • commercial paints • stains • ISA 11-686 • 11

Collected by Chris Boylar Mount Hagen 2014

Photo: Jessica Lindsay Phillips.

**\$ 5,500**







### K3. SHIELD, Wahgi Valley, Western Highlands, PNG

Depicting The Phantom with arms crossed holding two pistols

Inscribed: ,ÄúPhantom,Äù and ,ÄúMan Who Never Dies,Äù ( the "r" of never was either forgotten, or didn't fit, and added below )

Wood, commercial paint, rattan. H: 152.4 cm.

Ex Tokyo Dave, Winnipeg, Manitoba; SkullStore, York, Ontario, Canada.

Jessica Lindsay Phillips Collection, Toronto, Canada.

Photo: Jessica Lindsay Phillips.

Price: \$ 6,000









# PHANTOM



MI SAVE TOK  
PISIN NAU

20t

WANTOK